

### *A Note from the Editor . . .*

We return after a brief hiatus for the special issue of the *Journal* devoted to the articles accepted from the 2001 Outreach Scholarship conference held at The Pennsylvania State University. We look forward to publishing another special issue next year capturing the articles accepted from the 2002 Outreach Scholarship Conference, "Catalyst for Change," held at The Ohio State University in October 2002.

We begin with an article by Greg Wise, Denise Retzleff, and Kevin Reilly of the University of Wisconsin-Extension addressing an issue that is at the heart of the matter in terms of making outreach scholarship and engagement count for something on campus, i.e., reassessing and restructuring the reward system itself. Like most issues that strike at the heart of the matter, this one has the potential of ruffling the most feathers and doing the most good. Models such as these help us turn theory into practice in our own organizations.

In labor-management relations generally, and in collective bargaining negotiations particularly, achieving agreement on one's own side of the table can often be as challenging as reaching agreement across the table, and sometimes more so. The same can be said of inter-disciplinary approaches to problem-solving by universities as well. For university faculty to be effective when working with communities, they must speak coherently and with consistent messages and approaches. Several articles in this issue address the challenges that can present themselves when two or more departments or programs decide to team up for a positive intervention in the community.

Marilyn Amey of Michigan State University, Dennis Brown of Michigan State University, and Lorilee Sandmann of the University of Georgia chronicle the lessons they learned while working with a community to establish an urban community council and also while training and assisting participants in creating and running a community center. They discuss the challenges faced when community interventions are organized around problems to be solved, rather than disciplines to be researched.

Two articles discuss experiences from the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program funded by the United States Department of Education's Urban Community Service Program. In the first article, Barbra Beck, Gail Newton, and Cheryl Maurana of the Medical College of Wisconsin share lessons that they learned in undertaking a community

intervention aimed at facilitating the community-building process for low-income public housing residents. This program put a premium on listening to the residents through a Community Dialog in eighteen public housing communities to determine what the residents themselves thought would most improve their overall quality of life.

In the second article relating to the Neighbor-to-Neighbor program, Karen Caldwell of Appalachian State University, Mary Domahidy of Saint Louis University, and Michael Penick, a doctoral student at Saint Louis University, analyze the effects on students from participation in an inter-professional university-community partnership. In the current climate of strong support for and interest in “service-learning” initiatives, much more needs to be known about the kinds of student learning that is occurring in these cooperative ventures.

The engagement concept has been well received in higher education circles generally, but the truth is that many have embraced the concept without ever fully understanding or articulating what it really means. Frank Fear, Richard Bawden, Cheryl Rosaen, and Pennie Foster-Fishman of Michigan State University address this issue by providing an analytical framework for the consideration of “engaged learning.” They invite others to share their own definitions and interpretations so that a common understanding of this foundational premise can be achieved.

A principal benefit of outreach scholarship is that practice can inform theory, and not just the reverse. This was one result of an innovative service-learning course at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Marcia Finkelstein describes this program, which called on students in a class on the social psychology of HIV/AIDS to work with a community AIDS service organization throughout the semester. The papers submitted and presented by the students at the conclusion of the term reflected the academic lessons learned in this “up-close and personal” encounter with the community.

Michael Slavkin of the University of Southern Indiana also makes a strong case for the value of service-learning, through a study of 148 pre-service teachers enrolled in educational psychology courses at four midwestern colleges and universities. The study confirmed his hypothesis that students who had experiences in service-learning courses would show a stronger link between theories learned in course work and methods employed in the field than students who did not have these experiences. It also suggested that pre-service teachers should be encouraged to be involved in

service-learning projects early on and throughout their educational experiences, and preferably before other education courses are taken.

Margaret Miltenberger, Brenda Pruett, Ruthellen Phillips, and Susan Triplett of the West Virginia University Extension Service provide a case study of a project involving seventeen parents and twenty-six school personnel in a low-income West Virginia community. The project's purpose was to promote the success of school children by maintaining their reading skills and nutritional well-

---

*"A principal benefit of outreach scholarship is that practice can inform theory, and not just the reverse."*

---

being over the summer months. A principal finding of the study was that the development of multiple and meaningful relationships was just as important to the students as the stated objectives related to their reading skills and nutritional health.

Civic engagement by the university is a critical and ever-changing dimension of the outreach and engagement effort. Marshall Welch of the University of Utah describes and analyzes a year-long project at his university to promote a better understanding of civic engagement on the part of twelve faculty who volunteered to be part of a study/action group. Through regular meetings, readings, and extensive discussions, the group achieved a heightened sense of the value of civic engagement, and also served as a catalyst for the implementation of a number of concrete community-based research projects.

Finally, we resume our tribute to the late Ernest Lynton with an article by Richard Cherwitz and Charlotte Sullivan of The University of Texas and Terry Stewart of Austin Community College. Their article describes the Intellectual Entrepreneurship Program at the Graduate School at the University of Texas at Austin, a program which received Honorable Mention for the Ernest A. Lynton Award for Faculty Professional Service and Academic Outreach. Through this article and program the authors seek to create an awareness of the intrinsic value of outreach programs to the academic mission, and trumpet the liberating and transforming nature of outreach initiatives.

Let us know your thoughts on these matters. All of us are smarter than some of us.

Best,  
Melvin B. Hill Jr.  
Editor